News of the Sighting of the Moon over the Radio

Question: We received the news of the sighting of the new moon for the Shawwaal Eid over the radio. There was much confusion amongst the people and until ten that morning the Eid salaah was not yet performed. Can the Eid salaah be performed the following day? Many people ended the fasts when they heard the news over the radio. Are they liable for Qadhaa?

Answer: If the sky was clear where you are and the moon was not sighted, there was no need to end the fast because of the radio broadcast. It will be necessary to repeat the fast, unless it is substantially proven that the moon was indeed sighted.

The Eid salaah may be performed the following day since this is allowed when need be. In fact, the salaah for the Eidul Adhaa may even be performed on the third day if need be. It is not permissible to end the fast based on news from the radio or a telegraph since these are not regarded as evidence in the Shari'ah.

Tirmidhi reports a Hadith stating that when Hadhrat Kurayb τ returned to Madinah from Shaam during Ramadhaan, Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ asked him whether he had seen the new moon himself. He replied that others had seen it and that even Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ had fasted. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ then told him that they had seen the moon only on the Saturday evening and will therefore complete the fasts according to their sighting until they sighted the next new moon. "Is the sighting of Mu'aawiya τ also not sufficient for you?" Hadhrat Kurayb τ asked. "No," replied Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas τ, "This is what Rasulullaah ρ taught us." And Allaah knows best what is most correct.